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Subject: The Love of Praise.

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OF

SERMONS

PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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## THE LOVE OF PRAISE.

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“Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.”—**MATT. vi. 16-18.**

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The frequent dissuasive exhortations of our Master on the subject of exhibitory piety, show how deeply the minds of his cotemporaries were affected by this perverted form of the love of praise. That which, above all things, should be sincere—the heart’s service toward God—had become a mere net to catch men’s praise withal; and our Saviour here, as in other places, rebukes the outwardness of their piety, and teaches men rather simplicity, truthfulness.

The love of praise, for which men do so many things, which is the fertile cause of so much insincerity in religious observances, which was the occasion of so great corruption in the Jewish Church, and which has been a corrupting influence ever since—this is not in itself an evil. It is a constitutional trait. Its function is of transcendent importance. It tends to civilize men, and to harmonize them. It has a tendency to render the intercourse of society smoother, and to fill it with the minor forms of pleasure. Men who have no sense of what is agreeable to other men, grate harshly, jar sadly, upon them; but a sensibility to praise, when it is rightly educated and restrained, is the right hand of benevolence. It goes far to make life pleasant between men. It does much to restrain selfishness. It is the natural antagonist of that pride which wraps a man up in his own selfishness, and makes him sufficient for himself. It connects a man with his fellows, and makes their praise, which is his desire, turn upon his conduct. It perpetually influences what he does, since he wishes to appear in the sight of men to be kind and praise-deserving. So that, in due measure, and within proper bounds, it is a quality or trait of great moment. It

may be easily educated to move in a right or a wrong channel; and unless it is watched, unless it is corrected, it produces some of the worst evils which are known to men—pretence, insincerity, extravagance, and all manner of shams.

Now, there are very many influences at work upon us, tending to give an exaggerated force to this love of praise; and we ought to take heed, for a variety of reasons, lest we be overborne by it, and carried into some of its excesses.

In the first place, it is a national trait. There are race-peculiarities, and there are national peculiarities which are not exactly of the race-type or stamp. Some nations are proud and haughty; some are vain; and we are both—though I think vanity predominates in us. We love praise. We seek it. No person who has been present where there was a distinguished foreigner can have failed to perceive that almost the first questions asked him were, "How are you pleased with the country? How do you like our people?" That breaks out in respect to our nation or to our community, which, if it were to break out in respect to ourselves individually, would seem ridiculous, and would be corrected by the ridicule of society. If one were to go into a company and say, "How do you like me? How do I seem to you? Am I well dressed? Am I handsome? Do you enjoy me?"—he would not be tolerated. Asking about such things would not be permitted. Although everybody knows that the mind of everybody else is filled with such questions, nobody is allowed to ask them. But the strength of our national vanity is such, that we do not perceive how improper the trait is which leads us continually to want to know what is the opinion that is formed of us, and to covet praise, and oftentimes even flattery.

I do not mean to be understood as saying that we alone have this trait. I suspect that in every nation on earth a compliment to the nation would conciliate an audience, and that the attempt to conciliate an audience by that means might be made under almost any circumstances with the certainty that it would be agreeable. But I think there are sturdier people in some countries than in our own. I think there are some countries in which there is more of pride and less of vanity than there is among us.

This national trait, which is in the very atmosphere, as it were, and which belongs to public sentiment, hides from us the reality of the quality in ourselves, and the excess to which we may be carrying it. Our institutions tend to produce it, to educate it, and to reproduce it. For we look to the people for everything. It is the popular judgment that determines laws, magistrates, policies,



all; and we are accustomed to refer everything to the people. In order to obtain favorable judgments from them we have to solicit them. We win them by argument, and we win them also by praise. On the one side and on the other—on the side of those that address, and on the side of those that are addressed—men are perpetually played upon by this love of praise. We defer to other men's opinions.

Men's interests, too, are continually leading them to desire to please. We are all striving after a better condition. We inherit no honors. Every man makes himself. Mainly, men make their own fortunes—and they do it by the hardest. In doing it, there is a large element of conciliation required. Men are obliged to make themselves appear very desirable to their neighbors.

That which already exists in our national constitution, which is a national trait, and which is very much promoted by our political institutions, is also carried forward and educated by our commercial interests. Very few men are sturdy enough to stand alone. We go in flocks. We keep each other in countenance. Unpopular opinions are held by but few. More and more embrace them as they begin to be popular.

When anti-slavery sentiments were unpopular, how very few men avowed those sentiments! What a vast middle class, who hated slavery as much as anybody, but believed in maintaining it, became more and more convinced of the wisdom of emancipation by the changes which gradually took place! And how large was the circuit of the adherents of the anti-slavery doctrine when it became a national feeling and was crowned with victory and with power! Why, there were none left in the nation that ever had any other opinion than that slavery ought to be abolished. They "always thought so," and "always believed so."

There are very few persons who are willing to take up a question or cause on its own merits, and stand, if necessary, alone, and quietly, and with simplicity, when all men's notions are beating against them, as waves beat against the rock. It is hard for a man that loves praise to stand alone, and stand against opposition.

The evils that flow from that love of praise which our circumstances tend to cultivate in excess, are manifold. Many of them are well known, but they are not always traced back to their right cause.

Love of praise introduces, in the first place, a false standard of character. It presents to the young who are entering upon the seeking of their fortune, and the establishment of their reputation, a wrong aspect of life. They enter upon it under a mistake, where

their thought is that they must be comely, or seem comely. Where their idea is that to seem well is to succeed, manhood is corrupted in its fountain. The only true ground for those who are aspiring, when they enter life, is *to be*—to be right, to be true, to be manly; and *to seem*—to seem what they are. But where the love of praise is dominant, men come into life rather with the thought as to how they shall gild their manners; as to how they shall make themselves conspicuous; as to how they shall win “golden opinions.” They bait the hook perpetually with falsehoods, and deal perpetually in uncertainties, or in mere gilded shows; and it takes away the vitality of a manly character.

It introduces also, a false standard of values. Men value not that which is intrinsic, but that which, like money, will buy something. They come to esteem things by their power of procuring praise; not by their power of building up a true manhood; not by that which will make them sturdy; not by that which will make them simple and true; not by that which will make them patient in tribulation; not by that which will give them fortitude under trials; not by those things which go to build them solidly; but by those things which go to garnish and decorate them, and make them appear comely before men.

We see how it is in shops where “fancy prices” prevail. Fancy prices are prices that are unwarrantable. They are prices that are over and above the real utility of things. They are prices which are derived mainly from the fact either that goods have a power of acting upon the fancy or imagination, or that they have that which addresses itself to men’s love of praise. Things that are beautiful, things that will be esteemed as beautiful, things that will be admired, and that will win praise—these are the things to which fancy prices are attached.

That which is true in commerce is just as true in character, in regard to the change of the value of things. That which lies in the mind, as a spring coiled up in a watch, and acts invisibly, imperceptibly, but all the time with an inward sense of what will make us agreeable to people, is a true criterion of measurement. The ideals of life are the measures of value.

Love of praise leads easily to falseness, to boasting, to flattery. For men flatter each other that they may be flattered, and praise each other that they may be praised. It is the rebound of what we do that we are looking for. So there comes in falseness in entertainment; falseness in social life; falseness in friendship.

Do men make sumptuous repasts from hospitality? You are invited as a guest. Is it because you are wanted? Is it to make



you happy that the table is spread royally, and that the gorgeous house opens its portals, and that there is music and gaiety, and every appliance that can tickle the fancy and the palate? Is all this pains taken in order to bestow benefaction on you? O fool! You are of the least value of the whole. You are invited that you may appreciate the master of all this display, and praise him. Much hospitality is a sham and a delusion.

“When thou makest a feast,” says the Saviour, “seek not the great; seek not your friends; seek not those who can make another dinner as big as yours, and ask you in. Do not make commerce, an interchangeable thing, of your hospitality. Do not say, ‘You dine me, and I will dine you; you tickle me, and I will tickle you; you praise me, and I will praise you.’ When thou makest a feast, if thou wouldst have credit for real hospitality and kindness, go out after the poor in the streets. Bring in those who cannot pay you again.”

A cardinal truth is sincerity in hospitality. But where men love praise, how it eats out the heart; and how many that are apparently friends are more friends for what they shall get from you than for anything else! How does adversity test! What a touchstone trouble is! How many when you were on the crest of the wave were friendly to you! But when you went down in the trough of the sea, where were they? Not one could be seen. Much of the friendship of life is kindly, is good-natured; but there is a vast amount of friendliness that is merely a net set to catch your praise. It is friendship for the interest of one alone, and not for the mutual interest of both. Therefore it is said, “Let love be without dissimulation.” Do not pretend to love when you do not. Let your friendship be real.

This love of praise in excess, inordinate, vitiates taste. In the early schools of painting, or what are called “the pre-Raphaelite schools” in Italy, and in the early German schools, when men believed, and when painting was merely the language by which they expressed their belief, there was a very stern and literal adhesion to the thing that was thought true. One reason why men have been so fascinated with what are called “the pre-Raphaelite pictures” is that they were painted, not for exhibition, but as a sincere offering to truth. They were genuine, and therefore, however much they were “out of drawing,” however far they were from the niceties of a more refined art, there was always an earnestness and a simplicity in them, and they meant what they expressed. This was even more true of the old German than of the Italian schools. There is nothing like the hearty simplicity of the early German painters.

After Raphael, and largely in consequence of his influence, there came a day when there was more beauty and grace, and more correctness of form; but a large spirit of exhibitoriness crept into the pictures. There is scarcely a Madonna of Raphael that does not look as though it was conscious of being a Madonna; scarcely a sweet and angelic face that is not apparently aware that it is sweet and angelic; scarcely a pious countenance that does not seem to know that it is pious. There is an intolerable sense of vanity that has crept into all his pictures. And in this way love of praise has corrupted art. It has caused art to pander to men's vanity, or to worse feelings in men.

That which is true of art is just as true of literature. Men that write under the itch of vanity leave the effects of that vanity on what they write. I have an idea that whatever men do, the feeling which inspires them to do it shows through. I fancy that no man makes a mark, even with a slate-pencil, that something, I do not know what, does not go out from him into that mark. I believe that no carpenter builds a house that something of him does not go into that house.

We know what *style* is in language; and style goes with everything else. It goes with the builder and painter. It is a personal element which goes with one's work. And where a man is vain, whatever he does carries the marks of his vanity. There never can be strength where one is vain. Strength goes with reality, and sincerity, and earnestness. Power and strength do not belong to a literature which is corrupted by love of praise or vanity.

We see manifestations of this quality in architecture. How few buildings are willing to stand on their uses! If they are made for commerce, they bear traces of vanity on their face. Have you never noticed, in going through the streets of New York, those flounced and decorated fronts—those vast piles of insignificant architecture, with carvings, and cornices, and all manner of gew-gaws, and tinsels, and trinkets, wrought out of wood or stone? There are buildings there that would wake you at midnight, saying, "Get up and look at us!" They are evidently built to be seen, and kept to be looked at; and there is not a simple line nor restful element in the whole of them.

And when men who build such structures come to build our houses for us, what is it that they build? What is the ideal which they have in their minds? Is it the sweet contentment of home? Is it domestic joy, and snugness, and cosiness? Is it a house that shall be fit for the love and quiet of the family, simple and full of comfort? All through the land are dwellings which show that



they have been built by architects. This is evident from the yearnings and cravings of vanity which they express. Here stands, on some bleak hill, without a tree or a vine near it, a dwelling-house, with a huge portico and three great staring Greek columns with their capitals, which are of all things the most unsuited to our climate. It is extremely expensive, and ill-adapted for the purposes to which it is devoted; but the owner was going to have a Grecian house, and it was built to gratify his own and the architect's vanity.

And we find all through our dwellings the same vicious out-working of the love of praise. Houses are built, not so much for convenience and comfort, as for the display of skill and the gratification of vanity.

When the architect has done his work, and the house is to be furnished, that same trait is still more apparent. While men are yet poor, so that it is not in their power to be more than comfortable, it is not so observable as when they begin to be wealthy, and can "dash out," as it is called. Then what overloading magnificence we see! Then what cumbrousness! Then what needless and useless expense! Then what crowding! Then what overdoing in every direction, so that the whole house is one exclamation point, inside and outside, standing for admiration! Taste is corrupted; and one of the results of the corruption of taste is that men feel that this sort of taste is the standard. It goes a great way further than violating the canons of taste. It causes the corruption of morals and the corruption of character.

There are hundreds of young men that should be married who are not married. To marry early is discreet and wise. And when men and women are of a marriageable age, I think it to be, in general, true, that it is wholesome for them to be married. It is not necessary that they should remain single because they stand in poverty; for two can live cheaper than one, if they live with discretion, if they live with co-operative zeal, if they live as they ought to live. If the young man is willing to seem poor when he is poor; if the young woman, being poor, is willing to live poorly; if they are willing to plant their lives together like two seeds, and wait for their growth, and look for their abundance by-and-by, when they have fairly earned it, then it is a good thing for them to come early into this partnership. For characters adapt themselves to each other in the early periods of life far more easily than they do afterwards. They who marry early are like vines growing together, and twining round and round each other; whereas, multitudes of those who marry late in life stand side by side like two

iron columns, which, being separated at the beginning, never come any nearer to each other.

Many young men feel that they cannot marry until they can *support a wife*; and by that they mean, until they can support a *house*; yea, until they can live in a house that befits them; until they can make a show; until they can live as their kind of people, the class to which they belong, live—for everybody belongs to a class, a set. When they can do these things they will marry, but not before. And the result is that they are corrupting life in the very fountain.

And when they marry, they make a great mistake if they say, "We will not undertake to keep house; let us board. Then we can have all the comforts of life; we will have all the appearances provided for us; and we shall be relieved from a thousand cares."

There is no school which God ever opened, or permitted to be opened, which young people can so ill afford to avoid as the school of care and responsibility and labor in the household; and a young man and young woman, marrying, no matter from what source they came together, no matter how high their fathers have stood, one of the most wholesome things that they can do, having married for love, and with discretion, is to be willing to begin at the bottom, and bear the burdens of household life so that they shall have its education. I tell you, there are pleasures which many young married people miss. I would not give up the first two years of my married life for all I have now. I live in a big house, with a brown stone front, and very fairly furnished; but, after all, among the choicest experiences of my life were those which I passed through in Indiana, when I hired two chambers up stairs; when all my furniture was given to me, and was second-hand at that; and when the very clothes which I had on my back had been worn by Judge Birney before me. We were not able to hire a servant. We had to serve ourselves. It was a study every day how to get along with our small means—and it was a study never to be forgotten. I owe many of the pleasures which have run through my life to being willing to begin where I had to begin, and to fight poverty with love, and to overcome it, and to learn how to live in service and helpfulness, and in all the thousand ingenuities which love sweetens and makes more and more delightful.

I cannot bear to hear a rich father, whose son has married the daughter of a rich man, but where the riches are not ample enough to set them up, say, "We will keep the young folks at home;" or, "They had better board until they are in better circumstances, so that they can keep house in a respectable way." I would say to such



a young couple, "Go out where buildings are cheap, and take a cottage; or go where you can find apartments that you can afford; and begin in one room, and begin anywhere, almost, rather than not keep house." Do not be ashamed of yourself, young man. If you have married right, you have married one who will be even braver than you are, and will be willing to commence with you, and build from the foundation, truly and genuinely, to the very top.

I look with very great alarm upon the corruption, or perversion, of young people's tastes in this matter. They marry, too often, for love of praise, and sacrifice the happiness of married life to that which is esteemed praiseworthy and fashionable by other people. My advice to every young man or young woman is, Marry for love; love for life; take life at just the point where God's providence has put you; stand there with fidelity and truth; work your way up; and do not go a step farther than you are warranted in going by that which you have earned. Be proud of every step; and when, God having spared your life and prospered you, you become rich and strong, do not be ashamed to go back to the spot from which you started. Do not be ashamed to say, "I began life with no property, and I have worked for all that I have." Be proud to look into the pit from which you have dug your way.

There is another danger springing out of this overweening sense of praise. It gives rise to a corruption to which I have frequently alluded incidentally. I mean the temptation which men are perpetually under, where they live for the love of praise, to go beyond what they are able to sustain, and to resort to all manner of devices in order to maintain appearances. There is a kind of pride that I respect very much; but where I know that persons will all the week long scrimp themselves, and live with the utmost restrictions, that they may have the pleasure of going out on Sunday in a fine dress to make a show, I cannot say that I respect that. Where persons might live with a great deal of comfort if they were content to live in simplicity; but keep up a big establishment, and make themselves absolutely slaves to appearances, so that their very life is wrung out of them by anxieties, I cannot say that I respect that. It is not pride that actuates them; it is vanity.

But it is worse yet where men live beyond their means, and restrict not only themselves but others, because they must make a good appearance in society. That is dishonesty. And where, in order to carry out the behests of this false principle of vanity, they are attempting to maintain a show, and, for the sake of accomplishing this, make use of men, and virtually steal—that is, try to get from men more than they render an equivalent for—they are dis-

honest indeed. Where men beat down the merchant, and beat down the mechanic, and keep themselves in debt to others, and make men serve them on the right hand and on the left, that they may keep up a vain show, they are doing that which is worse than contemptible. It is culpable to the last degree. And manhood is debauched in them.

This is the real meaning of extravagance, as it exists in our collective life in towns and cities, and against which there is so much inveighing. He is not extravagant who lives richly. He is not extravagant who spends what he has abundantly, when he has an abundance to spend. If a man is rich, and he lives in a palace, he is not extravagant. He may be spending money profusely, and yet not spending it extravagantly, if he lives entirely within his means. But any man is living extravagantly who is living beyond that which is prudent; beyond that which he can afford; beyond that which is fit for his position and circumstances and character. It is extravagance in this sense that is culpable. It is not extravagant for a man who has abundant possessions to live according to his means; but for other people who have not his means to attempt to live as he does, and to eke out by tricks and shams and pretences what they lack, is an extravagance; and this is the kind of extravagance which is increasing in our cities.

Not only is the desire for praise corrupted, and not only does it lead into all manner of mischiefs, in these respects, but it tends largely, also, to undermine the sincerity of men's thoughts, of their convictions and of their religious life. It is not to be supposed that one should never pray openly, because Christ says, "When thou prayest enter into thy closet, and shut thy door." This is a general dissuasion from exhibitory religious observances. You have a right to be seen going to church, although display in worship is forbidden. You have a right to be seen relieving the poor; and yet we are commanded not to let our left hand know what our right hand doeth. Being charitable that men may see how charitable you are, being devout that men may know it, and seeking reputation by religion or in charitable movements—these things are perverse, corrupt and corrupting. Against all these we are bound to strive.

Do not, then, suffer your conscience to be extinguished by the love of praise. No matter what men may think, no matter what men may require, no matter what the style of society is, no matter what the praises and compliments of men may be, let every man see to it that he has a conscience, bright, clear-eyed, well-instructed. Know what is true, what is right, what is honorable, and what is manly, and stand by them. Guard your conscience against per-



version and corruption by the love of praise. Love simplicity in so far as it means truth.

If God made you half a fool, it is better that you should seem to be half a fool than that you should make believe that you are wise. All sorts of animals are willing to seem what they are. An ass is always willing to be thought an ass; and he honors God in it. An owl is always willing to be thought an owl; and he fulfills the function given to him, even if he does look wiser than he is. And a man should be willing to be just what God made him. Not that he should not desire to increase, to augment, his talents; not that he should not put his money out at interest; but a man who is ignorant had better admit himself to be ignorant. A man who is not a genius had better not think himself to be a genius. A man who is poor had better think he is poor. A man who is unskilled had better admit that he is unskilled. Whatever you are, while you strive for greater excellence, stand on that which is true and right, and do not make yourself out to be more than you are. Do not attempt to put on guises and pretences, in the vain hope of winning praise.

Will men never learn anything? A man talks to me in such a way that I see through him in a moment. He is trying to make an impression on me about himself, or about this, that, or the other thing; and the moment the door is shut, I say, "What a fool he was to think that I could not see through him!" And yet, I go straight to my neighbor's and try the same trick; and when I am gone, he says, "What a fool!" And he goes to his neighbor, and does the same thing!

We do not learn anything. We do not seem to think that truth makes itself felt. But even though, for a little time, by some device, one may make himself seem other and better than he is, yet in the main men's opinions rest on what is true. Your character in the community is a thing fixed, definitely, and your reputation generally will be what your character is. Men see through your shams. They accommodate you, and call you what they think you want them to; they call you a peacock, or an eagle, or any other bird, as the case may be, to please you; but they laugh as soon as your back is turned; for they know what you are. If you are a jackdaw, they know it. And these weaknesses, these dishonesties, these corrupting pretences, after all, win but very little. It is false coin that you give, and you get false change, as well as false goods. It is far the best thing for one to attempt to be real, and to be willing to appear at just what he is worth.

Remember one thing more. If it be hard be sincere and simple,

the degree of hardness is the measure of the necessity for it. It shows how far you are gone. If it is difficult for you, with open face, and quiet eye, and temperate tongue, to stand before men just as you are, how far you must have gone in the wrong direction! You need, more than any other thing, to restate your case to God, and begin at the foundation again.

And let us recollect that while we are playing our tricks and pranks on one another, and living in mountebank shows—in a thousand flatteries and insincerities—there is an Eye that is perfect Truth, and looks through them all. We never can deceive, not for an hour nor for a moment, Him with whom we have to do.

This phantasy of life, this dance of intoxication, this gay revel, will soon be over, and then all the disguises that we are wearing, all the masks that we are putting on, God will tear off, and we shall stand revealed at the last day just as we are. The truth will prevail in the end.

Build, then, for the great day of all—for immortality. Build genuinely, truthfully, lovingly, purely; and then you shall win not only the reality, but that very praise which you have coveted, and sought to buy or bribe with false pretences. Blessed is he who lives in transparent simplicity here, whose yea is yea, and whose nay is nay—nothing more nor less; and whom God loves because he is true, and brings into his kingdom, where all his children shall be forever.



## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WHAT are we, that we should draw near to thee, thou Eternal Power? We cannot lift our thought to the level of thy being. We do not understand thee, nor by searching can any one find out the Almighty unto perfection. We are drawn to thee by our necessities. We are drawn to thee by the need which we have of light, and strength, and comfort. Thy power is not alone in the heaven, but upon all the earth. We are thy creatures. Though we are so far from thee, and so unlike thee; though we are not obedient to thy commands; though we do not fulfill our duties according to the measure of our knowledge and our strength, still we are thine. Erring children are we, but we are children. And we are in our Father's house. And we come with confessions of our unworthiness. And much more, O God, we come to make mention of thy goodness. We come to make mention of thy past mercies. We come to make mention of all that we have known in our homes of the goodness of God, which has attended us at every step, and through every year of our lives thus far. We would acknowledge thy goodness in sparing us, and thy goodness in bounties to us. All that has made life bright and joyful we have owed to thy kind providence. How much we owe thee for these mercies! And how much more do we owe thee for the light of hope; for foresight; for the expectation of immortality; for the vision of our Saviour; for all the gracious promises which are contained in thy Word; for that which we accept by faith of Christ, and which enables us to triumph in life, and over death; and for the glory of a blessed immortality!

O Lord Jesus, make yet more plain to us thy mission, and the mercy that is therein; and give forth to us that divine Spirit by which we may rise to an understanding of thy love, which can never be understood here in its fullness. Bring us, by thy Spirit, into sympathy with thee. Rule in every part of our life. Subdue us to the power of love, that we may cast out every evil desire; that we may resist the things which are offensive to thee; that we may become little children, transformed by thy grace into simplicity, into truthfulness, and into obedience.

Grant, we pray thee, to all in thy presence, the mercies that they need, even if they know them not themselves; if they know that they are troubled, but do not understand the reason of this trouble. Thou, O God, dost understand perfectly; and we pray that thou wilt distribute thy favors, not according to the wisdom of our asking, but according to thine own insight and knowledge of us.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing, to-night, to all those who are under circumstances of trial and affliction. Sanctify to them the dispensations of thy providence.

Bless all those who feel the pressure of care and trouble. May they be able to put their burdens upon the Lord, and cast their care on Him who careth for them. Forbid that thy children should be in bondage as other men are. May they be able to set such an example under trouble, and anxiety, and cares, and afflictions, that men shall see that there is in them and around them more power than those men find among men—even the power of the mighty God.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to all those who are troubled; to all those who are tempted; to all those who find themselves ready to slide; to all those who fear; to all those who are in any way caught, entangled, and threatened in life. Wilt thou give them gracious deliverance.

Grant, we pray, if there are those who look on their way among men, and ponder a better life, that they may have the inspiration of thy Spirit. Have they not in their thoughts evidence that thou art moving upon

their souls? May they not turn back as from unwelcome things. May those who are conscious of living evil lives, turn their souls, with all their purposes, away from evil, and unto good. Help them! And if they be pursued and caught, and dragged back again into evil, wilt thou rescue them!

We pray, O Lord, that men may learn the new life; and, with mighty outcry, with heart and hand lifted to God, may they find strength to break away from evil, and to cleave to all that is good.

We pray that thou wilt bring to troubled minds, to struggling consciences, to men who are filled with doubts, that settled peace which thy Spirit gives to those to whom the truth comes. Wilt thou bring all inquiring souls to the feet of Jesus; and there may they find peace. Taking his yoke and his burden, may they have rest unto their souls.

O Lord, we pray that thou wilt give us truth. Wilt thou grant that it may be known more and more perfectly throughout our land.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless thy churches of every name. May they be built up in holy faith. And we pray that thou wilt spread intelligence and virtue. May righteousness prevail among thy people. We pray that thou wilt quench lust and passion.

Wilt thou be pleased to help those who are laboring for the reformation of manners. We pray that peace may be vouchsafed to all nations; that selfishness may be checked; and that human feelings may everywhere be felt by men toward men.

Let thy kingdom come, and the whole world see thy salvation.

We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*



### PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt bless the word spoken, that it may be a caution, that it may throw light upon the paths of those who are erring, and that it may incite to diligence those who need to arouse themselves. Deliver us, we pray thee, from the temptations of vanity. Teach us how to make life benevolent, and not selfish. Grant, we pray thee, that we may be able, in all our relations one to another, in society, and wherever our duties are, to live in simplicity and in truth, fearing God and loving men. Deliver us, we pray thee, from the temptations of the present life—its guiles; its delusions; its false compliances. Deliver us from everything which degrades the soul, and bring us at last, in the love of truth, in the love of God, and in the love of men, into thine own heavenly kingdom, through riches of grace in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Amen.*



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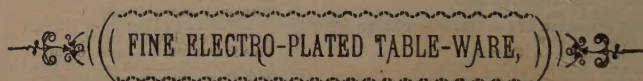
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